

and therefore the most judicious policy would be to let them alone—leave the people without restrictive laws, to assume the character of soldiers whenever they please, at no other time and in no other way—permit the farmer to remain at the plough handle, and artisan in his work-shop, undisturbed by the whistle of the fife, the rattle of the drum and the waving of the flag: teach the young when at school, every thing necessary to be known, appertaining to the duties of a soldier as you would impart to them other useful studies; and whenever wanted, the whole force of the State could be embodied, and at the first signal war gun, be in readiness for any kind of service.

My own long experience of the vacillating character, up and down course of uniformed volunteers—going in and out of regiment, as well by companies, as individually has abundantly shown that nothing short of a national affront suspended over our land, or anticipated hostilities, can ever produce such an influence upon the public mind during profound peace, as to uphold militia establishments upon a scale commensurate with the spirit of our laws: for it is notoriously true, that when the novelty of training in or out of uniform cases, I have found men of all classes, young and old, prefer business pursuits, or ordinary amusements to military exercises. As the militia is wisely considered the bulwark of our safety, by adopting the easy, effectual mode of instruction above indicated; whenever regiments should be needed for active service, they will spring into existence with suitable heads to command them, altogether amply qualified for any imaginable crisis.

How much confidence and admiration were inspired when we beheld a bevy of scientific officers clustering around the consecrated flag of their country—placing themselves at the head of undisciplined militia leading their columns onward in quick succession, from victory to victory; subduing fortified forts as strong as nature and art could make them—forty battles fought and won, beginning and ending, more like magic romance than actual reality; leaving our achievements even in a foreign land untarnished by one solitary defeat or blur, which upon the whole is I believe without a parallel in the history of the world. Who were they that so gloriously executed the unexampled order of General Scott, preparatory to the battle of Cerro Gordo? they were the brave accomplished officers educated at West Point, able at a glance to apprehend what their General's order contemplated; and best of all knew how in the fittest manner to carry out his views. The connected, laborious evolutions which that original order called for, together with the wonderful success attending its triumphal execution; not only electrified every American bosom, but its rare comprehensive character produced abroad such an effect—a shock of surprise—as induced an English journalist to remark in reference thereto, “that a like order